

(Continued from Sermon 17)

## 8. The New Covenant with Israel

### Jeremiah 31:31-34 (NLT):

<sup>31</sup> *“The day is coming,” says the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.*

<sup>32</sup> *This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife,” says the LORD.*

<sup>33</sup> *“But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day,” says the LORD. **“I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.***

<sup>34</sup> *And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, ‘You should know the LORD.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already,” says the LORD. **“And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.”***

It might be helpful to know the time frame of Jeremiah’s prophesying. Jeremiah prophesied in the years leading up to the Babylonian Exile from around 625 B.C. to around 586 B.C. Imagine the comfort and hope that were given to the people of Israel for the future as they were being herded from their land to Babylon as prisoners.

God promised to make a **New Covenant** with His people. This New Covenant applied exclusively and solely to the people of Israel. Israel had broken the first covenant that God gave them. (Jeremiah 11:1-8). The earlier covenant God referred to was the **Mosaic Covenant** contained in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. God warned them over and over again through His prophets, but the Jews loved their sin so they ignored their God. God had also announced in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 what would happen to those who disobeyed Him. Finally in 586 B.C., God had enough and unleashed a punishment that has lasted for over 2,500 years. Even though Israel was recognized in 1948 as a nation with national borders, they are still fighting with their enemies on all sides to keep from being destroyed.

God had set a holy standard of conduct for the people, but because of their love of sin they would not keep those standards. So God would make a new covenant with Israel. This New Covenant would put God’s Law in their minds and on their hearts, not just on stones like the Ten Commandments.

### Exodus 34:1 (NASB):

<sup>1</sup> *Now the LORD said to Moses, “Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered.*

Read the rest of Exodus 34 for more detail.

There will be no need to encourage people to know the LORD because they will all know God already (cf. Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14). God's New Covenant will give the faithful Israelites the inner Holy Spirit power to obey His commands and enjoy the blessings that come with obedience.

Ezekiel 36:24-38 (TLB):

*<sup>24</sup> For I will bring you back home again to the land of Israel.*

*<sup>25</sup> " 'Then it will be as though I had sprinkled clean water on you, for you will be clean—your filthiness will be washed away, your idol worship gone.*

*<sup>26</sup> And I will give you a new heart—I will give you new and right desires—and put a new spirit within you. I will take out your stony hearts of sin and give you new hearts of love.*

*<sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit within you so that you will obey my laws and do whatever I command.*

*<sup>28</sup> " 'And you shall live in Israel, the land which I gave your fathers long ago. And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.*

*<sup>29</sup> I will cleanse away your sins. I will abolish crop failures and famine.*

*<sup>30</sup> I will give you huge harvests from your fruit trees and fields, and never again will the surrounding nations be able to scoff at your land for its famines.*

*<sup>31</sup> Then you will remember your past sins and loathe yourselves for all the evils you did.*

*<sup>32</sup> But always remember this: It is not for your own sakes that I will do this, but for mine. O my people Israel, be utterly ashamed of all that you have done!'*

*<sup>33</sup> The Lord God says: "When I cleanse you from your sins, I will bring you home again to Israel, and rebuild the ruins.*

*<sup>34</sup> Acreage will be cultivated again that through the years of exile lay empty as a barren wilderness; all who passed by were shocked to see the extent of ruin in your land.*

*<sup>35</sup> But when I bring you back, they will say, 'This God-forsaken land has become like Eden's garden! The ruined cities are rebuilt and walled and filled with people!'*

*<sup>36</sup> Then the nations all around—all those still left—will know that I, the Lord, rebuilt the ruins and planted lush crops in the wilderness. For I, the Lord, have promised it, and I will do it."*

*<sup>37</sup> The Lord God says: "I am ready to hear Israel's prayers for these blessings and to grant them their requests. Let them but ask,*

*<sup>38</sup> and I will multiply them like the flocks that fill Jerusalem's streets at time of sacrifice. The ruined cities will be crowded once more, and everyone will know I am the Lord."*

In Old Testament times the Holy Spirit was not available to all believers. The big difference in the New Covenant is the presence of the Holy Spirit in all believers, Joel 2:28-32 (CEV):

*<sup>28</sup> The LORD said: Later, I will give my Spirit to everyone. Your sons and*

*daughters will prophesy. Your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions.*

*<sup>29</sup> In those days I will even give my Spirit to my servants, both men and women.*

*<sup>30</sup> I will work wonders in the sky above and on the earth below. There will be blood and fire and clouds of smoke.*

*<sup>31</sup> The sun will turn dark, and the moon will be as red as blood before that great and terrible day when I appear.*

*<sup>32</sup> Then the LORD will save everyone who faithfully worships him. He has promised there will be survivors on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and among them will be his chosen ones.*

The sins of the people resulted in curses from God in the Old Covenant. In the New Covenant God will forgive Israel's sins and remember them no more. But how is it possible for a just God to overlook sin? It isn't possible. God does not and will not ever "overlook" sin. All sin has been fully paid for by Christ, Isaiah 53:4-6 (AMP):

*<sup>4</sup> Surely He has borne our griefs (sicknesses, weaknesses, and distresses) and carried our sorrows and pains [of punishment], yet we [ignorantly] considered Him stricken, smitten, and afflicted by God [as if with leprosy].*

*<sup>5</sup> But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement [needful to obtain] peace and well-being for us was upon Him, and with the stripes [that wounded] Him we are healed and made whole.*

*<sup>6</sup> All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has made to light upon Him the guilt and iniquity of us all.*

If you're familiar with Matthew you might remember Jesus announcing this New Covenant from the upper room just before His crucifixion. This New Covenant would come about by the shedding of Christ's blood. Forgiveness of sin could only happen if Christ became our substitute and paid the penalty we would have had to pay for our sins. The perfect sinless one was sent in as a substitute hitter and He hit a home run winning the crown of salvation for the team of believers.

Matthew 26:26-28 (NKJV):

*<sup>26</sup> And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."*

*<sup>27</sup> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.*

*<sup>28</sup> For this is **My blood of the new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

Luke 22:20 (NKJV):

*<sup>20</sup> Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is **the new covenant** in My blood, which is shed for you.*

To point out Israel's permanent relationship with God because of this **New Covenant**, God

compared her with the heavens and the earth, Genesis 1:14-19 (NASB):

*<sup>14</sup> Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;*

*<sup>15</sup> and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.*

*<sup>16</sup> God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also.*

*<sup>17</sup> God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth,*

*<sup>18</sup> and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.*

*<sup>19</sup> There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*

In the same manner God declared that Israel was to be His chosen nation (people). It would Be the same type of permanence the sun, moon, earth, and stars have until Christ returns. In other words Israel will always be the recipient of the promises God initially gave only to them. God never breaks a promise and He will use the same power in keeping His promises to Israel as He used in creating the universe. Throughout history men have repeatedly tried to destroy Israel, but no one has ever completely defeated them, and according to what the Bible predicts— no one ever will. God's promises to Israel through Abraham will be fulfilled at the Second Coming of Christ.

Some of you are familiar with these promises, but for those of you who are not let's see what they say, and for those who are review is always beneficial when studying the Word of God.

Genesis 12:1-3 (NASB):

*<sup>1</sup> Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;*

*<sup>2</sup> And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;*

*<sup>3</sup> And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."*

Genesis 12:6-7 (NASB):

*<sup>6</sup> Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanite was then in the land.*

*<sup>7</sup> The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.*

Genesis 13:14-18 (NASB):

*<sup>14</sup> The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward;*

*<sup>15</sup> for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.*

<sup>16</sup> "I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.

<sup>17</sup> "Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you."

<sup>18</sup> Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

Genesis 15:1 (NASB):

<sup>1</sup> After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great."

Genesis 15:1-21 (NASB):

<sup>1</sup> After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great."

<sup>2</sup> Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"

<sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir."

<sup>4</sup> Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir."

<sup>5</sup> And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."

<sup>6</sup> Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup> And He said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it."

<sup>8</sup> He said, "O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?"

<sup>9</sup> So He said to him, "Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

<sup>10</sup> Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds.

<sup>11</sup> The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup> Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him.

<sup>13</sup> God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.

<sup>14</sup> "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.

<sup>15</sup> "As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age.

<sup>16</sup> "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

<sup>17</sup> It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces.

*<sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:*

*<sup>19</sup> the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite*

*<sup>20</sup> and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim*

*<sup>21</sup> and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite."*

**Genesis 17:1-12 (NASB):**

*<sup>1</sup> Now when Abram [Abraham]<sup>1</sup> was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.*

*<sup>2</sup> "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."*

*<sup>3</sup> Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying,*

*<sup>4</sup> "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations.*

*<sup>5</sup> "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.*

*<sup>6</sup> "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.*

*<sup>7</sup> "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.*

*<sup>8</sup> "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."*

*<sup>9</sup> God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.*

*<sup>10</sup> "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised.*

*<sup>11</sup> "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you.*

*<sup>12</sup> "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.*

**Genesis 22:15-18 (NASB):**

*<sup>15</sup> Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven,*

*<sup>16</sup> and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,*

*<sup>17</sup> indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

*<sup>18</sup> "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

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<sup>1</sup> Brackets mine.